

chaser a bottle of whisky; but the paper, thus basely treated, fell into the hands of an unconverted man, the buyer of the bottle, and was under God the instrument of his salvation. When the secrets of the great day shall be disclosed we have no doubt, many such illustrations of the outwitting of the devil by the Lord will then be made known.

Of course an incident like this is peculiarly grateful to an editor. And the thought of such a thing is also very encouraging to a writer whose uppermost desire in writing for religious papers is that souls may be saved and Christians may be fed and helped in the blessed life. Let us daily pray God's blessing upon such means of grace.

I GO A FISHING.

J. T. KOLB.

Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, we also go with thee. They went forth and entered in a ship immediately and that night they caught nothing.—John 21:3.

Perhaps the disciples had been waiting several days at Capernaum for Jesus to come. And we know how wearisome it is to be indefinitely waiting. But it is nevertheless a true touch of nature to get wearied when we are expecting something to take place for which we are anxiously waiting. Hope deferred maketh the heart-sick. How often have we realized this in our day.

But it is Peter as usual that speaketh out: "I go a fishing." How consistent with the character given him alike by all the evangelists. "Well, brethren, you may wait here if you like, but I am tired waiting. I can't stand it any longer." His proposition was infectious and the others fell in with the suggestion and at once said, "We also go with thee."

Peter was a natural leader, not always wise but upon the whole a grand one. It is better to follow a leader whose zeal sometimes gets the better of his discretion than one whose discretion paralyzes his zeal. The Church of Jesus Christ suffers far more from her fears and caution than from her impulsive zeal. Jesus loved Peter and John above the rest, perhaps the one for his deep thoughtfulness and the other for his hot though sometimes intemperate zeal. The two qualities taken together go far towards making a good and perfect disciple.

They went a fishing, but that night

they caught nothing. All night long they had been casting and hauling their nets, but not so much as one stray fish did they catch to reward their labors. The morning dawned upon them weary and worn out, faint of spirit and weary of body. It is at this moment that Jesus appears on the shore. He usually appears to us at the very moment of our extreme need. How he appeared or whence he came we have no hint. That is he is not now visible to the world and only manifests himself to those who are his own, and for their sakes. So the spiritual presence of Jesus is a delusion to the unbeliever, but his disciples sooner or later discerned him.

At any rate there he stood. They saw a man, but did not at once recognize him. This was characteristic of every appearance of Jesus to his disciples. Mary did not know him at first, neither did the Emmaus disciples, but thought him a stranger. The disciples at his first appearance had to be reassured by his voice and the manifestation of his body. And so in this instance they saw, but did not recognize him. Jesus often comes to us and we know not that it is Jesus until he reveals himself. But certainly here he was, and he was going to make himself known by extending them help in their work. So Jesus comes and manifests himself to us in our common toil. If we toil all night and catch nothing, let us look toward the shore and we shall most likely see Jesus standing.

Jesus knowing that they were tired and hungry kindly inquires, "Children have ye any meat?" He saw their failure and called their attention to their own need. There is never a failure or seeming failure in this world that is not an occasion for Jesus to call our attention to him. "Without me ye can do nothing." They were to remember this word now. They had gone to their work without him or his word. The result was that they had nothing. Was it the remembrance of this that kept them patiently waiting during those long indefinite days at Jerusalem before the promise of the Father came upon them. It no doubt was a sore confession for them to make to a stranger whoever he might be that they had been unsuccessful for they were old and experienced fishermen. Yet it was the very beginning of their success when they frankly confessed their failure. "No" they answered

him. It was a short answer, but a true one. It is always better for us to confess frankly both our faults and failures than to attempt to conceal or excuse them.

Then came the encouraging advice, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find." (The Savior does not come empty-handed. He cares for us and provides for our needs, Phil. 4:19.) Perhaps this word reminded them of a former experience, (Luke 5:5-7 inclusive) and at least in part set John's thoughts to work again as the sight of the clothes lying and the napkin folded together had done at the sepulcher. For the rest, seeing, they obeyed the suggestion, they may have supposed that this stranger on the shore saw some indications of a shoal of fish coming on that side of the ship that they did not perceive. As a matter of fact, it may have been just this: The shoal of fishes might at that moment have been approaching them or it may be that Jesus being Lord of the sea and of all that moves therein called them forth at that time.

Whether this was a miracle or a simple coincidence in nature is not material to the incident. It is all one to the result and it is all one to us in our work. Whether he works as we say, naturally or supernaturally, it is all one to him and to us. He is Lord of both worlds, yea of all worlds, and has all power in heaven and in earth, with him there is neither natural nor supernatural. "And to the true child of God who lives and walks and works by faith there is neither natural nor supernatural." Jesus has naturalized the supernatural to us by his incarnation and he has supernaturalized the natural by his resurrection.

The prompt obedience richly rewarded.—Not knowing who their adviser was, they nevertheless obey his suggestion or command and cast their net on the right side of the ship; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Here we see the reward in obedience to the Savior's command. That there was a symbolic meaning in this wonderful draught of fishes there is no doubt. Just as there was symbolic meaning in their previous failure. This teaches simply this, that tho we must fail utterly in our work if we go forth to it without the Master, on the other hand there are no bounds to the success when we work under his eye and according to his word.

Jesus simply demonstrates his farewell sermon to them, in which he had